

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8348

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BD, IN, PK

SUBJECT: FRIENDLY COMMENTS ON PAKISTAN FROM SHAIKH
MUJIB

1. EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH SHAIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN
PUBLISHED IN THE TIMES FEBRUARY 29, BY KULDIP NAYAR,
TAKES VERY FRIENDLY LINE TOWARDS BHUTTO AND PAKISTAN.

2. AMONG QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO SHAIKH MUJIB ARE: "WE
ALL THREE COUNTRIES IN THE SUB-CONTINENT HAVE TO LIVE
LIKE GOOD NEIGHBORS AND MUST SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS THROUGH
PEACE".

3. ALSO: "I AM IMPRESSED BY MR. BHUTTO'S SINCERITY.
I AM OVERWHELMED BY THE LOVE AND AFFECTION SHOWN BY THE
PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN. THOUSANDS OF THEM LINED THE
ROUTE FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE VENUE OF THE ISLAMIC
SUMMIT. THEY CALLED ME BY MY NAME, MUJIB. THEY --
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BOYS AND GIRLS ALSO -- LUSTILY CHEERED ME WHEN THEY

SAW THE FAMILIAR KURTA-PYJAMA CLAD FIGURE AMONG THEM."

4. WHEN REMINDED OF THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN BANGLADESH BY PAKISTAN, MUJIB IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID: "I WANT TO FORGET ALL THOSE. I WANT MY PEOPLE TO FORGET THOSE. WE HAVE TO START AFRESH. YOU KNOW THAT PEOPLE'S MEMORY IS SHORT." REVERTING TO BHUTTO, MUJIB SAID: "I WANT TO HELP HIM. HE IS AN OLD FRIEND."

5. MUJIB REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF KASHMIR.

6. ASKED HOW SOON BANGLADESH WOULD HAVE DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH PAKISTAN, MUJIB SAID, "VERY SOON". HE PARRIED QUESTIONS ON HOW PAKISTAN'S RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH HAD COME ABOUT.

7. AS TO FUTURE OF 195 POW'S, MUJIB SAID DECISION ON THEM WOULD BE TAKEN BY INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH IN ACCORDANCE WITH DELHI AGREEMENT. HE INDICATED BANGLADESH ALREADY IN TOUCH WITH DELHI TO DECIDE TIME AND VENUE OF CONFERENCE WHICH, ACCORDING TO HIM, WILL BE AT THE FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL FIRST, "AND THEN WE SHALL MEET".

8. WHEN TOLD THAT THERE WAS GROWING ANTI-INDIAN FEELING IN BANGLADESH, HE REPLIED: "SOME VESTED INTERESTS AND FOREIGN POWERS" WERE OUT TO CREATE BAD BLOOD BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID INDIA HAS NOT INTERFERED IN BANGLADESH AFFAIRS AND VICE-VERSA.

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